

upon the other portions, yet there is much thickening and semi-opacity (with, as usual, a milky or opaline appearance) in the central region and in the fissures of Sylvius.—Cerebellum thought to be somewhat softened, its investing arachnoid slightly thickened.

Thorax. Lungs large and healthy.

Heart of medium size, its muscular tissue pretty easily broken down between the thumb and finger. A large, light-coloured coagulum in the right ventricle, which extends some distance into the pulmonary arteries.

All the valves have lost their transparency.—The mitral is cartilaginous throughout.

The lining membrane of the aorta is deeply injected, and there are some small *plaques* of incipient ossification just above the semilunar valves of the aorta.

ART. XII.—*Chloroform Inhalation in Amputation of the Thigh.* By
ROBERT ROBSON, M. D.

ON the 13th day of July last, I was called by an intelligent friend, (Hugh Rounolds, M. D., of Graysville, Ill.,) to see with him, at the house of August Degan, Wabash County, Illinois, a case of partial ankylosis of the knee-joint, caries of the upper third of the tibia, with hypertrophy of the superior portion of the inferior part of the bone, and extensive ulceration, &c., of the soft parts.

The patient, James Gray, is a youth of nineteen years of age, originally of good constitution, but in consequence of much physical suffering from an injury received near twelve months prior to the date of our visit, we found him much reduced, his general health impaired, his pulse feeble, his countenance cachectic, and his nervous system much disturbed, though his digestive apparatus performed its office as well as could, under such circumstances, be expected; but, notwithstanding, his health was rapidly declining.

Consultation having been premised, and amputation determined on, the patient was placed upon a table, in a recumbent posture, his head and shoulders reposing on pillows, the tourniquet, &c., arranged; when we proceeded to exhibit a small teaspoonful of chloroform, in a sponge, to his mouth and nostrils: but in little more than one minute he became sick and vomited, and the sponge was removed during his efforts to vomit; and the chloroform having measurably if not entirely escaped, it was again charged with the same quantity and exhibited as before, when vomiting again occurred. The above circumstances were repeated, and the inhalation carried on with short intermissions, during which, several drachms of the chloroform were consumed. The time occupied by this exhibition was nine minutes and thirty seconds, when the patient assumed the appearance of sound sleep. It was now ascertained that he was in a state of complete insensibility, and unconsciousness established.

With the assistance of Dr. Rounolds, I then proceeded to amputate the thigh, and take up the arteries; the operation occupying two minutes and a half. The application of cold water was now freely made to the stump, and had been applied but four minutes, at the time the sponge was removed from his mouth and nostrils (our supply of chloroform being exhausted), when he recovered from the effect instantaneously. At this moment Dr. Rounolds inquired of him whether he was still desirous of having his thigh amputated, and he replied that he was, and hoped we would not keep him longer in suspense. On being informed that the operation was completed, and that nothing remained but to dress the stump, he indicated some doubt of the truth of the assertion, when some one present elevated his shoulders while I raised up the stump, to the evident surprise and pleasure of the patient. The dressing was in proper time commenced and completed after the manner recommended by Liston. The patient was afterwards attended by Dr. Rounolds, and I cannot better express the happy termination of this case than by quoting the Doctor's own words in his letter of Aug. 3d. He says: "The day after the operation I called to see our patient, and found him free from fever, little or no pain, clamorous for something to eat, and without the slightest appearance of constitutional derangement. He had not taken the opiate which I left him. On the 20th July I removed the dressing, and found the stump nearly healed by the first intention; little or no pus was secreted, except at the two corners. One or two granulations I touched with argent. nit. On the 28th of July I paid him my last visit, and found him hopping about on his crutches, and moving the stump with facility. You will recollect we operated on the 13th of July. On examination I found the stump beautiful, hard and firm, perfectly healed, with the cicatrix running straight across the marrow line of its face. The cicatrix is of course tender, but with this exception, he is in fact well."

Remarks.—The above case of amputation of the thigh, performed without pain and without the knowledge of the patient, and his very rapid recovery, has excited much interest in this section, and illustrates in the happiest manner the influence of chloroform over the brain and nervous system. No unpleasant symptoms (with the exception of the vomiting), were manifested during the inhalation; on the contrary, his respiration, his pulse and general appearance were those of natural sleep, and continued unimpeded during his insensibility.

His nervous system remained quiet and undisturbed throughout, and undoubtedly facilitated the healing process. In the *American Journal of Medical Sciences* of July, 1848, page 35, we have a statistical table of amputations of one of the New York hospitals, from January, 1839, up to January, 1848, and the shortest period of cure there recorded is thirty-nine days; while our patient, under the use of the chloroform, recovered in the very short period of little more than fourteen days.

NEW HARMONY, Indiana, Aug. 25th, 1848.